

**BTMM 4497**  
**Temple University**  
**Spring 2010**  
**Mass Media and Children**

**Synopsis**

This course examines the history, economics, and structural features of media industries that cater to a young audience. The possible effects of television, video games, and the Internet on children and youth are examined, including issues of violence, learning, and consumerism. Contemporary issues regarding media's changing role in the lives of children and families are explored.



**Faculty**

Renee Hobbs, Ed.D.  
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Office Hours: Mondays, 3 – 4 p.m. and other times by appointment or chance

**Course Meeting Times and Location**

Mondays, Wednesdays, 1 – 2:50 p.m., Annenberg Room 4

**Required Reading**

Livingstone, S. (2002). *Young People and New Media*. London: Sage.

Readings are listed on the syllabus and provided by the instructor on Blackboard.

**Course Goals and Objectives**

1. Students will become more reflective and aware of the role of mass media in human development;
2. Students will gain knowledge about the history, economics and industry structure of children's media industries, including television, advertising, games and the Internet;
3. Students will gain knowledge about the cognitive, social and emotional aspects of children's media use including the impact of violence, advertising, and stereotypes on attitudes and behaviors;

4. Students strengthen critical reading skills in understanding and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research concerning children's media forms, genres, use and impact;
5. Students improve skills of written expression by using a variety of genres, including film and television reviews, formal letters, emails, web sites, research summaries, personal reflections, proposals and treatments;
6. Students improve creativity, research and communication skills involving observation, data gathering and analysis, and report preparation.

### **Course Requirements**

Assignment materials (including detailed assessment rubrics) will be available under "Assignments" on the course Blackboard site.

#### Weekly Response Papers (30%)

There will be some informal or formal writing every week with a focus on responding to course readings, formulating and expressing a point of view, and synthesizing ideas. Assignments will be posted on Blackboard.

#### Proposal for a Children's Media Product (20%)

Students develop a 3- 5 page proposal for an original children's media product, then pitch the concept to a production company.

#### Final Research Presentation (30%)

Students examine a specific topic related to the course, gather information to gain knowledge and acquire expertise, develop an original argument, and communicate their ideas. Students give a short oral presentation that includes supporting print and multimedia materials.

#### Class Participation (20%)

Quality of class preparation, in-class participation, contribution to the learning of others, and leadership are evaluated at the semester end.

### **Grading**

Grades represent the instructor's assessment of your work as compared to clearly identified criteria for evaluation and in relation to the performance of others in the class. A grade of A represents outstanding or exceptional work; an A- indicates high quality but not outstanding work; a B+ represents high quality work but with some limitations or evident weaknesses; a B indicates competent, satisfactory work. A B- in a graduate level course suggests that the student's work is lacking in some important way. A grade of C+ or C represents seriously flawed work. In most classes that would mean doing the assignments but misunderstanding fundamental concepts or presenting them in an unacceptable form. A grade of D represents failure and will be given only if assignments were extremely poorly executed or other failure to adhere to norms of appropriate student conduct. Work not submitted by the deadline will be awarded an F.

There are no make-up opportunities for missed exams, homework or other assignments. Please do not ask for an exception. Because media businesses rely on strict adherence to deadlines, this instructor employs a similar deadline standard. Please do not ask for an exception.

### **Approach to Writing Skills Development and Policy on Revision**

Students will develop writing skills by using informal writing every week to discover what interests them most about what they are learning. Students will write descriptive summaries of what they read and view. They will write a media review. Students will develop a proposal for a media product, following the generic conventions of this form. They gather new information to develop expertise on a topic of special interest and share what they have learned in a formal piece of academic writing.

All the writing students produce in this course will be public, to be shared with classmates and the world using a collaborative writing tool. Students will read each others' work and get the feedback from "critical friends." Revision opportunities are provided to help students polish and develop their writing skills.

### **Policy on Disabilities and Special Needs**

Any students who have a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation. Contact Disability Resources at (215) 204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

### **Policy on Plagiarism**

Students are expected to produce substantial amounts of writing for this course, and it is expected that you will be the author of all the work you submit. Students should use the American Psychological Association (APA) citation format for identifying all materials used for reference and information gathering. Please consult the instructor(s) if you have questions on how to identify the information sources that you use in preparing your work. Penalties for plagiarism may range from a reduced grade on an assignment to failing the course.

### **Policy on Attendance and Class Participation**

Attendance at all classes is expected as a sign of your intellectual curiosity and commitment to the learning process. The instructor will use class attendance as one element to assess class participation. More than one missed class in the semester will lower the course grade.

**BTMM 4497**  
**Mass Media and Children**  
**Course Schedule**  
**Spring 2010**  
**Professor Renee Hobbs**

PART I	PERSPECTIVES
Week 1 January 20	<b>Introduction to the Course</b>
Week 2 January 25	<b>Media and Child Development</b>  READ: Livingstone, S. (2002). <i>Young People and New Media</i> . London: Sage. Chapter 1: Childhood, Youth and the Changing Media Environment (pp. 1 – 29) and Appendix (pp. 252 – 243)
Week 2 January 27	<b>A Critical Look at Media &amp; Technology in Childhood</b>  READ: Alliance for Childhood (2004). Tech Tonic, Chapter 2: What's Wrong with a High-Tech Childhood? (pp. 19 – 34)  READ: Alliance for Childhood (2004). Tech Tonic: Towards a New Literacy of Technology. Chapter 6: Developmental Guidelines for Technology Literacy (pp. 71 – 84)
Week 3 February 1	<b>Digital Media for Babies and Children 2 and Under</b>  READ: Hughes, P. (2005). Baby It's You: International Capital Discovers the Under Threes. <i>Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood</i> 6(1), 30 – 40.
Week 3 February 3	<b>Preschoolers and Media</b>  READ: Dominus, K. (2004). "She Speaks 3-Year-Old" January 4, <i>New York Times Magazine</i> .  READ: Bedford, K. (2001). Reopening the Street for Younger Kids. Current. Available online: <a href="http://www.current.org/ch/ch0121sesame.html">http://www.current.org/ch/ch0121sesame.html</a>  READ: Shore, A. (2009). Convergence Citizens: The New Media Literacy of Pre-school Television. <i>Afterimage</i> (Sept/Oct), 29-31.

PART II	UNDERSTANDING THE BUSINESS OF CHILDREN'S MEDIA
Week 4 February 8	<b>Historical Review of Children's Media</b>  READ: Madej, K. (2003). Towards Digital Narrative for Children: From Education to Entertainment: A Historical Perspective. <i>ACM Computers in Entertainment</i> 1(1), 1- 17.  PLAY: My Pop Studio ( <a href="http://www.mypopstudio.com">www.mypopstudio.com</a> )
Week 4 February 10	<b>Producing Children's Media</b>  READ: London, R. (2007). Producing children's television. In J. Alison Bryant (Ed.), <i>The Children's Television Community</i> . Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum Associates (pgs. 77 – 94).
Week 5 February 15	<b>Economics of Children's Media</b>  READ: Calder, K. (2007). Selling Screen to Screen. <i>Kidscreen</i> , May.  READ: Alexander, A. & Owers, J. (2007). "The Economics of Children's Television." In A. Alexander (Ed.). <i>The Children's Television Community</i> . New York: Routledge (pp. 57 – 74).
Week 5 February 17	<b>Regulatory Context of Children's Media</b>  READ: Jordan, A. (2008). Children's Media Policy. <i>The Future of Children</i> 18(1), 235 – 249.  READ: Hendershot, H. (1998). "Action for (and against) Children's Television" In <i>Saturday Morning Censors: Television Regulation Before the V-Chip</i> . Durham, NC: Duke University Press (pgs. 61 – 94).
Week 6 February 22	<b>Regulating Online Children's Media</b>  READ: Simmons, C. (2007). Protecting Children While Silencing Them: The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act and Children's Free Speech Rights. <i>Communication Law and Policy</i> 12(2), 119 – 142.
Week 6 February 24	<b>Media in the Context of Family Life</b>  READ: Livingstone, S. (2002). <i>Young People and New Media</i> .

	<p>London: Sage. Chapter 2 (pp. 30 – 77)</p> <p>READ: Livingstone, S. (2002). Young People and New Media. London: Sage. Chapter 3 (pp. 77 – 118)</p>
<b>PART III</b>	<b>EFFECTS OF MEDIA ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH</b>
<p>Week 7 March 1</p>	<p><b>Prosocial Learning: The Early Years</b></p> <p>READ: Hendershot, H. (1998). Chapter 7, “Hey, Hey, It’s ‘Good’ TV: Fat Albert, CBS, and Dr. William H. Cosby” In <i>Saturday Morning Censors: Television Regulation Before the V-Chip</i>. Durham, NC: Duke University Press (pgs 193 – 216).</p>
<p>Week 7 March 3</p>	<p><b>Media Impact on Cognitive Functions and Academic Skills</b></p> <p>READ: Gaddy, G. (1986). Television’s Impact on High School Achievement. <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i> 50, 340 – 359.</p> <p>READ: Christakis, D., Zimmerman, F., DiGiuseppe, D. and McCarty, C. (2004). Early television exposure and subsequent attentional problems in children. <i>Pediatrics</i> 113(4): 708 – 713.</p>
<b>WEEK *</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK- No Classes</b>
<p>Week 8 March 15</p>	<p><b>Marketing to Children</b></p> <p>READ: Chester, J. &amp; Montgomery, K. (2008). No Escape: Marketing to Kids in the Digital Age. <i>Multinational Monitor</i> (July/Aug), 11 – 16.</p> <p>READ: Ramsey, W. (2006). Rethinking Regulation of Advertising Aimed at Children. <i>Federal Communications Law Journal</i> 58(2), 361- 392.</p>
<p>Week 8 March 17</p>	<p><b>Children, Health and Consumer Culture 1</b></p> <p>READ: Moore, E. &amp; Rideout, V. (2007). The online marketing of food to children: Is it just fun and games? <i>Journal of Public Policy and Marketing</i> 26(2): 202 -220.</p>
<p>Week 9 March 22</p>	<p><b>Children, Health and Consumer Culture 2</b></p> <p>READ: Schor, J. (2004). <i>Born to Buy</i>. Chapter 8- 10 (pp. 141 – 212)</p>

Week 9 March 24	DUE: Proposal for a Children's Media Program/Product
Week 10 March 29	<b>Violent Media and Aggressive Behavior I</b>  READ: Wilson, B. (2008). Media and Children's Aggression, Fear and Altruism. <i>The Future of Children</i> 18(1), 87 – 118.
Week 10 March 31	<b>Violent Media and Aggressive Behavior II</b>  READ: Buckingham, D. (1996). Chapter 4. Distress and Delight: Children's Experience of Horror. In <i>Moving Images: Understanding Children's Emotional Responses to Television</i> . Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press (pgs. 95 – 138).
PART IV	THE FUTURE
Week 11 April 5	<b>Sesame Street International</b>  READ: Carvajal, D. (2005, December 12). Sesame Street Goes Global: Let's Count All the Revenue. <i>International Herald Tribune</i>
Week 11 April 7	<b>Digital Nation</b>  READ: Digital Workshops, WGBH Frontline
Week 12 April 12	<b>Home Alone: Digital Media and Family Life</b>  READ: Livingstone, S. (2002). Young People and New Media. Chapter 5: Living Together Separately: The Family Context of Media Use (pp. 166 – 210)
Week 12 April 14	<b>Social Media for Children and Youth</b>  READ: Flanagan, C. (2007). Babes in the Woods. <i>Atlantic Magazine</i> , July/August.
Week 13 April 19	<b>Media Literacy</b>  READ: Hobbs, R & Mendoza (2007). <i>Growing Up Online. Study Guide</i> . Boston: WGBH, Frontline.
Week 13	READ: Livingstone, S. (2002). <i>Young People and New Media</i> .

April 21	London: Sage. Chapter 6: Changing Media, Changing Literacies (pp. 211 – 251)
Week 14 April 26	<b>Student Presentations</b>
Week 14 April 28	<b>Student Presentations</b>
Week 15	<b>Last Day of Class</b>
May 3	DUE: Final Research Paper or Creative Project